

# The Queensland Government Reconciliation Action Plan

# 2009–2012

Reconciliation – it's everyone's business



Reconciliation Australia  
RECONCILIATION ACTION PLANS



Reconciliation  
QUEENSLAND  
Incorporated



Queensland  
Government



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Reconciliation Action Plan  
2009–2012*

**Reconciliation** – it's everyone's business

## *Message from the Premier*



On 13 February 2008, the Australian Government apologised to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples for the unjust laws and policies of successive governments, and especially for the removal of children from their families.

In acknowledging the past and its enduring effect on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, the national apology was an important step towards reconciliation.

My government supported that apology. To fulfil its intent and bring about true reconciliation, we must redouble our efforts to close the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians in life expectancy, educational achievement and economic opportunity. I have

asked the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships to work across all government portfolios to ensure that closing the gap in disadvantage becomes a reality for Indigenous Queenslanders.

The Queensland Government Reconciliation Action Plan (the RAP) is designed to contribute to reconciliation in four key areas: relationships, respect, opportunities and accountability.

In order to strengthen relationships among the government, community, organisations and Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, initiatives in the RAP will increase Indigenous peoples' involvement in government policy making, recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and celebrate the achievements of Indigenous Queenslanders.

By fostering and expressing respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Traditional Owners and their cultures, the RAP will help to build trust, effective relationships and a sense of belonging.

The RAP also aims to increase educational and economic opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples — an outcome that will benefit Queensland as a whole and bring us closer to a future in which Indigenous people enjoy the same opportunities and quality of life that all Queenslanders expect.

The final component of the RAP involves measures to ensure my government is accountable for delivering these outcomes.

The 20 initiatives in the RAP support the ambitions of Toward Q2 — my government's plan for Tomorrow's Queensland. In particular, they will contribute to the ambitions for Queensland to be a strong, green, smart, healthy and fair place to live.

I am pleased to endorse this Queensland Government Reconciliation Action Plan for 2009–2012 and I encourage all Queenslanders to play their part in advancing reconciliation.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anna Bligh". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**The Honourable Anna Bligh MP**  
Premier and Minister for the Arts





# *What is reconciliation?*

Reconciliation is everyone's business.

Reconciliation may mean different things to different people. To the Queensland Government, reconciliation means:

- recognising the inherent rights, laws, customs, religions and traditions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their entitlement to enjoy and express such rights, customs, religions and traditions
- acknowledging that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are the first peoples and Traditional Owners of Australia, and have unique cultural relationships to the land, sea and waterways
- acknowledging our history and its legacies — both positive and negative, including that some past government policies have led to present-day problems for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples cultures being recognised and valued by all Queenslanders as part of their Australian heritage and identity
- taking action to reduce the gaps in life outcomes and opportunities
- providing fair treatment and transparency in our policies, programs and services
- making it clear that there is no place for racism or discrimination in Queensland
- giving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples a real say in the decisions that affect their lives and communities
- building a better future by working together.

Positive attitudes, a spirit of goodwill, mutual respect and the recognition of the effects of white settlement on Australia's first peoples, form symbolic cornerstones of the reconciliation effort. On the practical side, assisting in building the confidence and capability of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to participate fully in the community and working towards an improved quality of life for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are essential if we are to achieve true equality and full reconciliation in the broader Queensland community.

There is a positive role each and every Queensland public sector agency and Queensland public servant can play to contribute toward reconciliation. There is also a positive role for the Queensland Government in the broader Queensland community.





# *The Queensland Government Reconciliation Action Plan*

Reconciliation is a commitment of the Queensland Government. This Reconciliation Action Plan is consistent with the Toward Q2: Tomorrow's Queensland ambitions for Queensland to be strong, green, smart, healthy and fair.

The Queensland Government has laid solid foundations by implementing the Reconciliation Business and Leadership Action Plan 2005–2007. This plan focused on four key activities that were delivered annually — a Young Indigenous Leaders' Forum, a Reconciliation Business Forum, a Reconciliation Awards program for business, and a statewide communication campaign. These activities aim to foster Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership and reward those who are taking positive action toward advancing reconciliation. They will continue to form part of government's commitment to reconciliation.

The Queensland Government, in partnership with the Council of Australian Governments has committed to closing the gap in life outcomes and opportunities between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Queenslanders. Closing the Gap is therefore a critical element to advancing reconciliation in Queensland. Reconciliation can also be cultivated through Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander involvement in government decision making.

2009 marks the 150th anniversary of Queensland being declared a state in its own right. This milestone provides a unique opportunity to celebrate Queensland throughout 2009. The Q150 theme is “our people, our places, our stories” and the anniversary will be marked with a year's worth of special community events. Q150 provides a great opportunity to celebrate the cultures, stories, connections and contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders to our state and the broader community.

The Queensland Government will continue to support key Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander reconciliation events, such as Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC week, and promote these to the broader community.





## *The Queensland Government Reconciliation Action Plan continued...*

The Queensland Government wants to maintain the momentum of previous reconciliation activities and events and the public goodwill generated by the National Apology on 13 February 2008. The government can best advance reconciliation in the state by working with other organisations, other levels of government and other sectors. In particular, the government will continue to work collaboratively with Reconciliation Queensland Incorporated and Reconciliation Australia to promote reconciliation in Queensland, and to support partnerships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. The government will also actively encourage other organisations in Queensland, including local governments, to develop reconciliation action plans.

The Queensland Government Reconciliation Action Plan 2009-2012 was developed in consultation with all Queensland Government agencies, Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples and representatives from Reconciliation Queensland Incorporated and Reconciliation Australia. The actions listed in the following pages reflect the Reconciliation Australia principles of relationships, respect and opportunities. While the Reconciliation Action Plan focuses on 20 key cross-agency initiatives, agencies and individuals are also encouraged to pursue other actions that promote reconciliation.

The Queensland Government will ensure that all Queensland Government agencies demonstrate that the Reconciliation Action Plan is their minimum commitment to reconciliation and report on progress with implementation as part of their annual reports.

In setting targets for building relationships, respect and opportunities, this Reconciliation Action Plan ensures that the Queensland Government will contribute tangibly to reconciliation.





# strengthening *Relationships*

## **Corporate partners**

**Action:** The Queensland Government will proactively engage with private sector companies and peak bodies, including charitable and philanthropic organisations, to broker employment and business opportunities with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

**Target:** Each year there will be an increase in economic and business development opportunities and partnerships between the private sector, the community and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

**Leadership**  
Department  
of Communities

## **Q150 and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders**

**Action:** Throughout 2009, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders will be encouraged to participate in all major Q150 activities, and non-Indigenous people will be encouraged to engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander activities.

**Target:** Queensland's 150th anniversary will deliver at least 20 significant projects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and provide a further basis to advance reconciliation.

**Leadership**  
Department of the Premier  
and Cabinet

## **Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Council**

**Action:** The Queensland Government will support the whole-of-government Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Council to provide strategic advice to the government on policies, programs and services that relate to or impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.

**Target:** By June 2012, all Queensland Government agencies will have engaged with the Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Advisory Council on at least one policy, program or service.

**Leadership**  
Department  
of Communities





## strengthening *Relationships* continued...

### ***Queensland boards and committees***

**Action:** The Queensland Government will work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders to actively encourage more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to join the Queensland Register of Nominees to Government Bodies.

**Target:** The number of people on the Queensland Register of Nominees to Government Bodies who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander will increase by 20% by June 2012.

#### **Leadership**

Department of the Premier and Cabinet

### ***Young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders***

**Action:** The Queensland Government will work with more young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders to support the development of future leaders through the Young Indigenous Leaders' Forum.

**Target:** The annual Young Indigenous Leaders' Forum will be held each year for the next three years involving a minimum of 20 young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples per year.

#### **Leadership**

Department of Communities

### ***Queensland Reconciliation Awards for Business***

**Action:** The Queensland Government will continue to hold the Reconciliation Awards for Business each year for the next three years.

**Target:** In 2009, 2010 and 2011 the Reconciliation Awards for Business will deliver nominations of a consistently high quality and from more geographically diverse locations than in previous years. Sponsorship will continue to be secured for each award category.

#### **Leadership**

Department of the Premier and Cabinet

### ***Reconciliation Business Forum***

**Action:** The Queensland Government will actively promote the Reconciliation Business Forum.

**Target:** The Reconciliation Business Forum will be held each year for the next three years.

#### **Leadership**

Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation





# fostering *Respect*

## ***Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recognition in the Constitution of Queensland***

**Action:** The Queensland Government will insert a preamble into the Constitution of Queensland 2001 that includes formal recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

**Target:** In 2009, the Queensland Government will insert a preamble into the Constitution of Queensland 2001, giving formal recognition to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders.

### **Leadership**

Department of the Premier and Cabinet

## ***Embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives in schools***

**Action:** The Queensland Government will embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives across all areas of school practice in all state schools to promote a greater understanding of the histories, cultures, values, beliefs, languages, lifestyles and roles of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

**Target:** By June 2012, all Queensland state schools will embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives across the four main areas of school practice: personal and professional accountability, organisational environment, community partnerships, curriculum and pedagogy.

### **Leadership**

Department of Education and Training

## ***Acknowledging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Connections to Country***

**Action:** The Queensland Government will place Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander land and sea country names and other relevant cultural information (as agreed by Traditional Owner groups with agreed and/or confirmed land interests, and working with local governments) in signage in public places throughout Queensland (including main roads, trust land under the *Land Act 1994*, state forests, national parks including marine parks, and other conservation areas) to acknowledge connections to country and to foster cultural tourism. Local governments will be consulted to determine appropriate place names and cultural tourism opportunities.

**Target:** By June 2012, an additional 200 signs will be in place displaying Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander land and sea country names and other relevant cultural information as agreed, in public places throughout Queensland.

### **Leadership**

Department of Environment and Resource Management





## *fostering Respect continued...*

### ***Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art in public buildings***

**Action:** The Queensland Government will incorporate the use and display of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art and design in public buildings and public spaces and include explanation of their significance and meanings.

**Target:** By June 2012, where appropriate, public buildings and public spaces will feature Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts, cultures or designs and include explanation of their significance and meanings.

#### **Leadership**

Department of Public Works  
Department of the Premier and Cabinet (Arts Queensland)

### ***Working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples***

**Action:** The Queensland Government will review and implement whole-of-government protocols for working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, including strengthening protocols relating to Welcome to Country, Acknowledging Traditional Owners and Elders, and Queensland's two Indigenous peoples to ensure they are conducted in the most appropriate manner.

**Target:** By June 2010, all agencies will meaningfully apply government protocols for working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, including protocols relating to Welcome to Country, Acknowledging Traditional Owners and Elders and Queensland's two Indigenous peoples.

#### **Leadership**

Department of Communities

### ***Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural awareness and capability***

**Action:** All Queensland Government agencies will have Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural awareness and cultural capability strategies in place to enable staff to better understand, respect and appropriately work with and deliver services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.

**Target:** By June 2012, all Queensland Government agencies will have appropriate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural awareness and cultural capability strategies in place for employees, especially for those delivering front line services.

#### **Leadership**

Public Service Commission  
Department of Employment,  
Economic Development and  
Innovation





# increasing *Opportunities*

## ***Queensland Closing the Gap partnerships and Ministerial Champions***

**Action:** Cross-sectoral partnerships, initially in economic development and education, will be championed by relevant ministers to mobilise key organisations to tackle Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander disadvantage.

**Target:** By December 2010, two cross-sectoral partnerships will be signed off by relevant ministers and key stakeholders.

### **Leadership**

Department of Education  
and Training

Department of Employment, Economic  
Development and Innovation

## ***National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander reforms***

**Action:** The Queensland Government will work actively with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to achieve the Council of Australian Governments national Closing the Gap targets and strategies, including in the key areas of early childhood, schooling, housing, health and economic participation.

**Target:** By December 2009, the Queensland Government will have strategies in place to put Queensland on track to meet the Council of Australian Governments targets.

### **Leadership**

All agencies

## ***Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Foundation***

**Action:** The Queensland Government will actively support the Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Foundation (QATSIF) in creating partnerships to provide educational and other developmental opportunities for young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders.

**Target:** By June 2012, the Queensland Government will have assisted QATSIF to increase educational and other opportunities.

### **Leadership**

Department of Communities  
Department of Education  
and Training





## increasing *Opportunities* continued...

### **Public sector employment**

**Action:** All government agencies will implement Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment action plans to target employment retention and career advancement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees, in particular to middle and senior levels. Strategies to support this action include, but are not limited to, trainee, graduate, leadership, coaching, mentoring and mobility initiatives, formal study and professional development.

**Target:** By June 2012, the Queensland Government will:

- increase public sector employment to reflect Queensland Indigenous working age population share, currently projected to be 2.6%
- increase career advancement and support opportunities to promote state government agencies as an employer of choice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees especially at middle and senior levels.

#### **Leadership**

Public Service Commission  
Department of Employment,  
Economic Development and  
Innovation

### **Government contracting**

**Action:** The Queensland Government will identify government procurement that could lead to significant employment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, incorporating a requirement to develop and maintain an Indigenous Employment Participation Plan.

**Target:** In addition to the Indigenous Employment Policy, identify at least three other procurement areas in which to apply the requirement and 100% of all projects identified, to include Indigenous employment participation.

#### **Leadership**

Department of Public Works





## ensuring *Accountability*

### ***Annual agency planning and reporting on the Queensland Government Reconciliation Action Plan 2009–2012***

**Action:** All Queensland Government agencies will incorporate relevant reconciliation actions in their annual business plans and report on the progress of the implementation of the Queensland Government Reconciliation Action Plan 2009-2012 as part of their annual reports.

**Target:** Each Queensland Government agency has reported on the progress of the Queensland Government Reconciliation Action Plan 2009–2012 as part of their annual report for each year of the life of the plan.

**Leadership**  
All agencies

### ***Progress Report on the Queensland Government Reconciliation Action Plan 2009–2012***

**Action:** The Queensland Government will release a public report on the progress of the implementation of the Queensland Government Reconciliation Action Plan 2009–2012.

**Target:** By June 2012, the Queensland Government will release a public report on the progress of the implementation of the Queensland Government Reconciliation Action Plan 2009–2012.

**Leadership**  
Department of Communities

*The Queensland Government  
Reconciliation Action Plan 2009–2012*



[www.reconciliation.qld.gov.au](http://www.reconciliation.qld.gov.au)